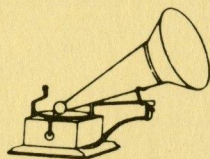


# Hillandale

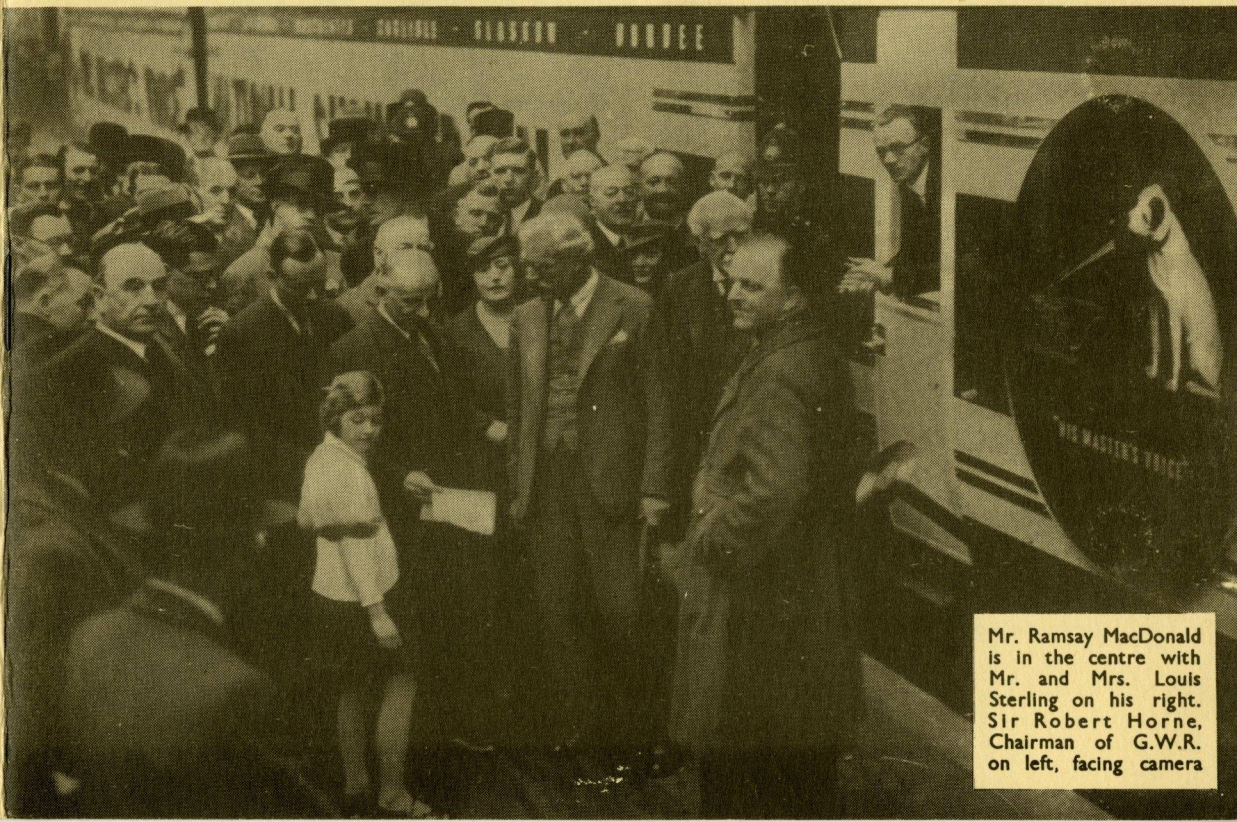


Journal of the  
City of London  
Phonograph and  
Gramophone Society

THE HILLANDALE NEWS

October 1987 No. 158

ISSN-0018-1846



Mr. Ramsay MacDonald  
is in the centre with  
Mr. and Mrs. Louis  
Sterling on his right.  
Sir Robert Horne,  
Chairman of G.W.R.  
on left, facing camera



# The HILLANDALE NEWS

The Official Journal of The City of London Phonograph & Gramophone Society

EDITOR: Peter Martland,  
DISTRIBUTION: David R. Roberts,

OCTOBER 1987

## CONTENTS

The "His Master's Voice" Record Catalogues; by Frank Andrews	255
London Meetings	263
The "His Master's Voice" Show Train; by Ruth Edge	264
Book Reviews	268
How Gramophone Records are Made; by Henry Seymour	270
75 Years Ago	275
Notes from the Bookshelf; by John W. Booth	276
Letters	278

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*Contributions for inclusion in The Hillandale News should reach the Editor by the first day of the month prior to publication. Thus, if intended for the December edition they should be received no later than 1st November.*

## THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH & GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY (Founded 1919)

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# The HIS MASTER'S VOICE Record Catalogues

by Frank Andrews

## PART 1

This series of articles is based on the lecture presented to the CLPGS at Neasden Library in August 1986. My thanks are due to the librarians at the National Sound Archive, to Sir Joseph Lockwood for his permission to research at EMI Music's archives, and to Leonard Petts, former archivist, and especially to Ruth Edge, the present incumbent, enabling me to have colour slides of some of the Stock Lists and catalogues.

### THE FIRST STOCK LISTS OF THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY

The Gramophone Company was established in London in April 1898 by William Barry Owen and Trevor Lloyd Williams as a trading syndicate. Owen had arrived in London from New York in the summer of 1897, apparently "wearing two hats." On the one hand he was in England to discover what could be achieved to exploit Emil Berliner's British gramophone patents on behalf of Berliner and his United States Gramophone Company, and on the other he was still representing Frank Seaman and his National Gramophone Company, whose New York manager he had been. Seaman was then the sole sales agent in the United States for Berliner's Gramophone and its disc records, and had formed the National Gramophone Company to facilitate the operation of this agency. Although he was confined to the United States, Seaman also carried a considerable amount of export business, and much of this was done through the house of the Prescott Brothers at the Edison Building, 44 Broad Street, New York. This was a successful importing and exporting establishment in various lines of merchandise.

On arriving in London Owen took on as his assistant John (Jack) Watson Hawd who had been a British connection with America's National Gramophone Company, and the Prescott House. Owen established his headquarters at the Hotel Cecil, which stood on a large site between the Embankment and The Strand. From here the business of taking British orders for gramophones and records, to come from the United States, was continued, whilst Owen was foraging around trying to find British businessmen willing to invest in the potential of the gramophone and its records.

Hand operated gramophones, with their accompanying 5-inch "plates", manufactured by two German businesses, had often been advertised in the pages of "Bazaar, Exchange & Mart", between the years 1891 and 1896, so when the National Gramophone Company was formed in 1896 in America, the gramophone was not an entirely unknown product when spring-driven importations from the United States began to arrive. The customers for these machines and records were mostly small businesses and, with each new batch of records arriving from America, the National Gramophone Company and William Barry Owen had to circulate lists among those doing business in machines and records. When the Gramophone Company was formed in April 1898 it continued the same policy until it was ready to issue the first of its "stock lists" in November 1898. It appears that none of those circulating lists now survive from about late 1896 to November 1898.



What do exist are some of the orders of that period from customers from many parts of Great Britain for the "E. BERLINER'S GRAMOPHONE" records. They were ordered from lists sent out by the Gramophone Company in the first few weeks after its foundation. The catalogue numbers were those of the American "Berliners" and would have been available while stocks lasted from each shipment.

The earliest traceable order for records carries the date 30th April 1898, and was addressed to the Gramophone Company at the Hotel Cecil. It came from Messrs. Wood, Broadgate, at Crowle, Doncaster, and called for 28 different discs ordered by their titles only. The Army and Navy Cooperative Stores was one of the large London customers, and the Salvation Army were buying records; not only the recording of their founder, General Booth, and of Colonel Lawlings but, strangely, for titles such as "Farmyard Imitations."

A customer from West Gorton, Manchester, with the unusual name of Bohanna, probably became the company's first Sales Agent for Britain, and later went to Australia as that country's first Agent, leaving in 1900 with between 100,000 and 150,000 discs.

The Company moved from the Hotel Cecil to set up its first recording studio in Maiden Lane, and Fred Gaisberg arrived from America in July 1898, to begin his commercial recording programme the following month. A pressing facility had been installed in Joseph Berliner's Telephonfabrik in Hanover, Germany, and enough pressings were available in time for the Christmas trade on the first Stock Lists, dated November 16th 1898. As earlier orders for records had been completed during the first seven months of the Company's trading, it does not seem surprising that these first lists of November 1898 carried the notice "All Previous Lists Cancelled."

Two lists bore the date November 16th. One, pale blue and of four pages, was the "American" list, not titled as such but including only United States "E. Berliner's Gramophone" numbers. All the records were 7" diameter. The other, printed on a deep rose-coloured paper and marked ENGLISH, comprised one sheet with double-column entries on both sides. Some errors are evident on this first English stock list. Syria Lamonte is given as "Lamonde"; Leo Dryden as "Byden"; Mr. Borwell has become Mr. Ball; Mr. Bryce and Tom Bryce have become "Brice"; Charles le Thiere's name has been wrongly spelt, and Master Langton, the boy soprano, has been credited with the same catalogue number as Tom Collins. There had been a few errors in the American list, mostly concerning German titles. They were corrected in the next known catalogues, the four Stock Lists dated 22nd February 1899. One of these was another American catalogue, which proved to show the last of the American Berliners. It was printed on buff paper and comprised only three pages. It was now the complete catalogue, the former one being cancelled.

The "English" catalogue also changed its colour, and was now on green paper, as were to be all subsequent catalogues for the seven-inch records. This Stock List had four pages and, at 10" x 7½", was double the size of the first catalogue; it had double columns of entries on each page.

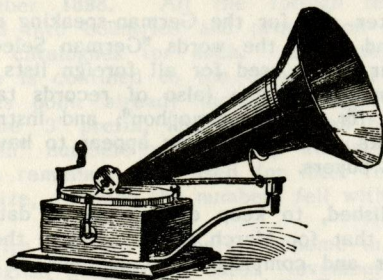


## AMERICAN.

Stock List—Feb. 22nd, 1899.

ALL PREVIOUS LISTS CANCELLED.

# RECORD CATALOGUE.



### A RIDDLE—READ.

No tongue I have, no hands, nor yet a voice,  
Yet talk, or sing, or play, which is your choice?  
There is no instrument that you can name,  
I am not mistress of; 'tis all the same  
With song, I sing untiring with the purest tone,  
Soprano, Alto, Bass or Baritone.  
All languages are mine, with wondrous skill  
I talk, weep, laugh, and will your senses thrill  
With stirring scenes from playwrights, comic, tragic,  
All bow in turn to my resistless magic.  
Music and song my captives, sound my throne,  
I reign supreme, their Queen,

### THE GRAMOPHONE.

IN ORDERING please select a considerably larger proportion than you require, or make a double selection, so that we may substitute where we cannot execute from our Stock. Do not judge the Record by its appearance, but by its SOUND. No Record is sent out unless the sound production is perfect.

### BAND SELECTIONS.

#### Records by Sousa's Band.

- 36 The Charlatan March.
- 70 Lily Bells.
- 82 The Little Flatterer.
- 93 The Boston Tea Party March.
- 104 Cotton Blossoms.
- 110 The Enquirer Club March.
- 113 The Serenade Waltz.
- 117 La Marseillaise.
- 129 My Old Kentucky Home.
- 131 Selections from Robin Hood.
- 139 A Hot Time in the Old Town.  
(Played during Siege of Santiago.)
- 141 Songs of Scotland.

#### Selections by Banda Rossa.

- 7 William Tell Overture.
- 32 Estudiantina Walts.
- 34 Nutmeg Polka.
- 94 Celebrity Polka.
- 97 Polka Trosi.
- 98 Kaiser March.
- 120 Mazurka De Angells.

#### Selections by the Metropolitan Orchestra.

- 1457 Gay Coney Island March.
- 1464 Rendezvous Waltz.
- 1467 The Scorching March.
- 1470 Coon Town Capers.
- 1477 Grace O'Moore.
- 1483 Sounds from the Sunny South.
- 1485 The Idol's Eye March.
- 1490 The Charlatan.
- 1492 Pero Porque (And Why Not?).
- 1493 At Midnight.
- 1494 Mexican Dance, Chloee.
- 1499 Roses and Thorns.
- 7000 The Griviron March.
- 7001 Down Ole Tampa Bay.

### INSTRUMENTAL SELECTIONS

#### Banjo Solos by America's Greatest Banjolist, Mr. Vess L. Ossman.

- 464 Narcissus.
- 473 Marriage Bella.
- 474 The Tyro Masurka.

#### Banjo Duets (Messrs. Cullen and Collins').

- 493 The Californian.
- 498 July Jingles.

#### Bugle Calls by Corporal Cassi, of Roosevelt's Rough Riders.

- 3438 No. 1.
- 3439 No. 2.

#### Clarinet Duets.

- 310 Titi's Serenade.
- 314 Duet from Norma.

#### Clarinet Solos.

- 301 Old Folks at Home.
- 307 Athlete Polka.
- 315 Little Nell.
- 325 Blue Bells of Scotland.
- 337 Home, Sweet Home.
- 330 Patrol Comique.
- 340 Charley is my name.

#### Cornet Duets.

- 3421 My Old Kentucky Home.
- 3636 McNeill Schottische.
- 3637 When Teddy Comes Marching Home.
- 3638 The Last Rose of Summer.
- 3641 Old Log Cabin in the Lane.
- 3648 The Southern Cross.
- 3643 Who's Dat Callin so Sweet.



Another list, dated Le 22 Fevrier, was the first with recordings aimed at the opening of a French-speaking market in gramophones and records. The vocal recordings were in French but had all been recorded in London. There were two columns of entries, all on a single page of turquoise-coloured paper, and the heading was neither "Stock List" nor "Record Catalogue", but "French Selections" and "Plaques Françaises." Instructions for ordering the records were printed in French.

The fourth list was similar in character and for the German-speaking market. The CLPGS reprint is on white paper and omits the words "German Selections"; the original was on pink paper, the colour to be used for all foreign lists in the years immediately following. This German catalogue (also of records taken in London) was headed "Platten Verzeichnis für das Grammophon", and instructions for ordering were in German. On all lists such instructions appear to have been directed more to dealers than to individual buyers.

Supplementary lists began to be published, to keep dealers up to date with the latest records. The first-known was that for March 1899. Unlike the catalogues it was printed on white art paper and comprised two columns of entries on one side of a single sheet. With the English catalogue of February 22nd these were to suffice until two more supplementary lists were published in November 1899. The catalogue numbers given to the records on the English, French, and German catalogues as at March 1899 were not differentiated. The "national" or ethnic-denoting prefix digits had yet to be devised. The only differentiation, probably for internal purposes, was the suffixing of the numbers with 'E', 'F', or 'Gy'. The bloc numbering system used for the various sections of the wide-ranging repertoires has been set out by Leonard Petts in "Talking Machine Review" No.10, page 46, and in combined issues Nos.63-64, pages 1726-1727, will be found the complete listing of the English-issued seven-inch Berliners and the later "Gramophone Records."

Recording continued in London after the March supplement was issued through to the first ten days in May, although no catalogues or supplements seem to have been issued. If issued they have not survived. Many of those recordings were in Russian; they were given their own catalogue numbers in a 11,000 series. Also, more French titles were recorded.\*

In May 1898 a recording machine was sent to Leipsig, Germany, and Fred Gaisberg left on his first recording tour. W. Sinkler Darby was already in Europe

\* A Court Order of the United States forbade the Berliner Gramophone Company from manufacturing gramophones and records, held to be infringements of the Bell & Tainter patents owned by the Columbia Phonograph Company General and the American Graphophone Company. Frank Seaman with his National Gramophone Company was already in dispute with the Berliner Gramophone Company and was not receiving any Berliner records from them. At the same time he was attempting to become associated with the Gramophone Company in London - but no more American-made Berliners were being exported. F.M. Prescott was touring Europe and Britain at this time, no doubt assessing the prospects for the new Zon-o-Phone machines and records with which he and Frank Seaman were soon to become involved.



making records for Deutsche Grammophone G.m.b.H., the German associate company. Perhaps Gaisberg's absence from London accounts for the lack of new catalogues and supplements during the greater part of 1899. While he had been abroad the decision had been taken to give recordings an extra prefix digit to indicate which ethnic or national catalogue they would go into. Leonard Petts' chart should again be referred to. The English catalogued records were not given a "national" digit and continued the different bloc number series started in November 1898. All the foreign recordings from this first expedition were divided into countries and printed on pink paper, but as a compendium, not as single catalogues for each. Separate catalogues were to come later but this article is confined to the development of the English language catalogue, which at this point already included French and German vocal records: the French had the '3' prefix, and the German had the '4' prefix. This left the original "English" numbers without any allocated recordings and so most of those blank spaces remained until used for later recordings, some of them with the new ten-inch size, although the numbers fell within the original seven-inch bloc.

With the new numbering scheme in operation the Gramophone Company issued an English Supplement dated November 10th 1899 printed on glossy white paper with single-line entries across the page on two inside pages. It had a front cover and a plain back. A second supplement dated November 28th was printed on the same type of paper but without a cover, and the two pages had double column entries.

With Fred Gaisberg having recorded for over a year, and Sinkler Darby making nearly 2,500 masters for the foreign lists during 1899 the Gramophone Company was in a position to produce a prestigious catalogue by December of that year. Undoubtedly this served as a strong advertisement for the Company and its products. Printed on art paper it had 100 pages within a soft flexible cover. It was entitled "Gramophone Record Catalogue" in gilt lettering, and there were some trailing leaves and a flower bud with a butterfly. The page-edges were also gilded. Inside were fifty-two views from different countries where the gramophone and its records were, or would be, promoted. There were photographs of 41 artists with 39 short comments about either the artists or the recorded material. An illustration of a dancing couple drew attention to the strict dance tempo records of Herr Iff and his Orchestra, made in Glasgow.

Other features of this catalogue were the inclusion of Russian, Middle East, and Oriental recordings. In reality the catalogue comprised twelve Stock Lists, and was not issued again in this form.

From the start the Gramophone Company had been harassed by the Edison Bell Consolidated Phonograph Co.Ltd., which implied that its Edison and Bell & Tainter patents had been infringed. This culminated in January 1899 with a writ of summons to that effect; Edison Bell sought an injunction to stop the Gramophone Company selling its wares. Perhaps this state of affairs was an inducement for the Company to begin recording abroad as early as it did, on the basis that if stopped in Britain it could expand in foreign parts.

While Gaisberg was recording on the Continent, the Gramophone Company sold its business to a new private joint stock company on August 23rd 1899, the Gramophone Company Limited. The Edison Bell litigation continued with this



new enterprise but the two parties settled out of court, a Consent Order being delivered by the Court on December 6th. The Gramophone Company Ltd. paid a certain sum to Edison Bell so that it and its three sister companies, then already established, could carry on unhindered.

A new English record catalogue was published in January 1900. If the 100-page catalogue of December 1899 is to be relied on, then all the American Berliners had by then been deleted. This new "Stock List" was now 8 pages in extent, all pages with double columns of single-line entries, the Scotch, Irish and Welsh recordings being listed separately in one-and-a-half pages. The arrangement of the lists was with the lowest-numbered bloc, the bands, placed first, followed by the orchestras and then all the other sections of the repertoire in an ascending order of bloc numbers, the artists within each bloc usually being placed in alphabetical order.

The front page of the January 1900 Catalogue featured Ian Colquhoun's recordings on two discs of Rudyard Kipling's "Absent Minded Beggar", made on behalf of the Daily Mail campaign to raise funds to aid servicemen and their dependants affected by the war in South Africa. Uniquely these records were without catalogue numbers and were first issued in December 1899. \*

The only illustration used on the standard Record Catalogues and Supplements had been the half-tone drawing of the "Dog" model gramophone. With the January 1900 Supplement, which was of four pages, the "His Master's Voice" picture was used. (The records were still marked "E. Berliner's Gramophone" and were unnamed, although by this time they carried the Recording Angel trademark.) The two inside pages detailed the records in double columns, some with French numbers for the English catalogue. Used with the January catalogue, this formed the February catalogue. March saw a nine-page catalogue, all others being cancelled, and as each new catalogue was complete with new entries and deletions, and was only a few pages in extent, there was no necessity for an annual catalogue as there would be in the future, when the entries would become so numerous that it was no longer feasible to produce a complete catalogue each month.

\* The June 1900 Record Catalogue was the first to show the price of "The Absent Minded Beggar" two record set at five shillings, the whole of which was forwarded to the "Daily Mail" Boer War Fund. Our Society's reprint of the first page of a June 1900 Record Catalogue is not the English one just mentioned. Its heading has been printed with a typeface different from all ten English catalogues of 1900. It does not show the price of "The Absent Minded Beggar" set, and not only does it fail to show the latest records issued on the UK list but it also includes entries for records which were no longer available in England! This other June 1900 catalogue may be an Australian one - the word "ENGLISH" on the front page being a description of the repertoire, although there was a short and separate French section at the end, not a feature of the catalogues issued in Britain. It is known that Mr. Bohanna left for Australia in February 1900 taking with him up to 150,000 discs to establish an Australian Agency. He arrived on March 3rd finding that a plague was rampant. The more florid type used for this supposed Australian Record Catalogue's heading was common to other printed material used by the Company in Australia.



The "His Master's Voice" picture was used again on the March supplement which was of two-and-a-half pages of entries.

Complete catalogues were issued monthly throughout 1900, except for February and May. In May, with the expiry of the Bell-Tainter patent for cutting into wax, or wax-like substances, the Gramophone Company pressed ahead with its own method, perfected by Eldridge R. Johnson.

Supplements to the Stock Lists were issued more or less on a monthly basis.

The supplement for June 1900 did not add any new records to the catalogue; it offered piano, harmonica, and balalaika recordings from the Russian catalogue. British record buyers could obtain the foreign catalogues if they so wished, and could order the records. Other foreign records were made available to the British purchaser in June 1900 with a special booklet called "Nuggets, Nuggets, Nuggets", a selection of 100 records from various catalogues.

The July Supplement showed a reduction in size of the "His Master's Voice" picture, enabling some of the new records to be itemised on the front cover. There was also a special Supplement devoted entirely to the new band recordings.

The September 1900 Supplement and the October Record Catalogue were the first to list recordings made by the wax cutting process, but there was nothing to indicate that this was so. The last zinc masters to be used in any number had been used on June 11th. The monthly catalogue was then ten pages of double-column entries in extent. As happened in November 1899, two Supplements were published in November 1900. That dated November 22nd showed a new departure, being the first to carry the likeness of a recording artist, Mme. Benzing, soprano. A special supplement in the same month drew attention to operatic arias drawn from a number of catalogues. Unless any were already in the U.K.'s catalogues none of them appeared in the next month's Stock Lists nor in any subsequently.

To be continued

#### FORTHCOMING LONDON MEETINGS

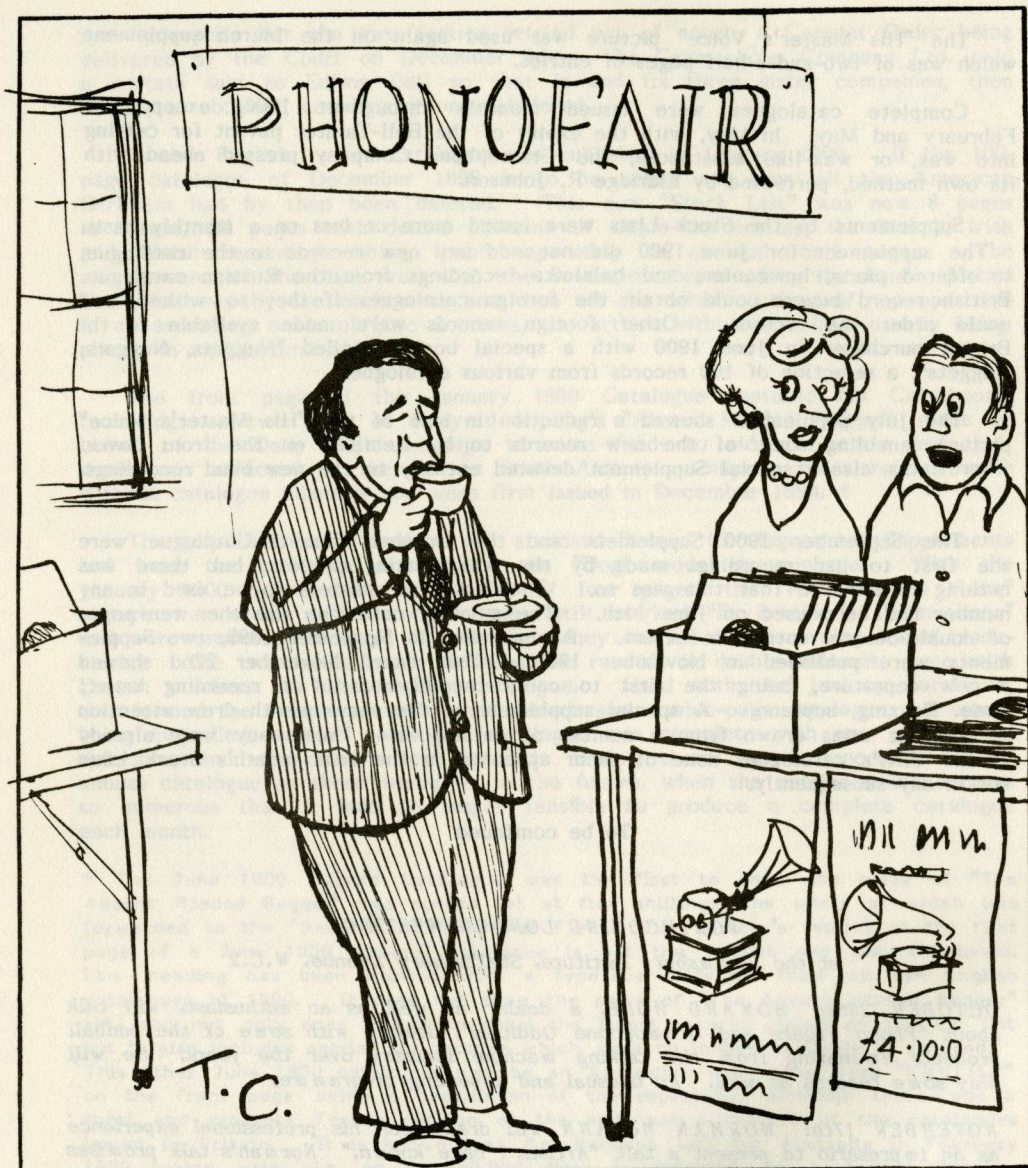
at the Bloomsbury Institute, Shaftesbury Avenue, W.C.2

OCTOBER 20th: HOWARD HOPE, a dealer as well as an enthusiast, will talk about "Phono Freaks and Gramophone Oddities", dealing with some of the oddball products emanating from the talking machine industry over the years. He will play some records as well. An unusual and appealing programme.

NOVEMBER 17th: NORMAN McCANN will draw upon his professional experience as an impresario to present a talk "Artists I have known." Norman's talk promises to be very interesting and should not be missed.

\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*





"Looking at old Gilbert, you'd never dream he was the world's foremost authority on unusual lead-in grooves, would you?"



# London Meetings

28th July 1987

## PRESIDENT'S NIGHT: "ARIAS, BALLADS, AND CHORUSES"

GEORGE FROW'S concert of Blue Amberols drew a large audience to Bloomsbury and gave in return a highly entertaining evening. The programme was presented in three parts, the middle one being a selection of British Blue Amberols issued on the outbreak of the Great War; stirring patriotic titles such as "Till the Boys Come Home;" comic songs like "Here we are again", and "Tipperary;" and for unashamed bathos, "So you want to be a soldier, little man," which was given more dignity than it deserved by David Brazell (the man who first sang Katie Moss's "Floral Dance."

This martial interlude came amid an evening of delights and surprises which corresponded accurately to the programme's title, "Arias, Ballads, and Choruses." I am not much of a ballad man, but among the arias I enjoyed Melitta Heim's performance of "Volta la terrea fronte alle stelle" from *Un Ballo in Maschera*; Paul Althouse with "M'Appari" from *Martha*; and Adelina Agostinelli singing "Addio del Passato" from *La Traviata*, and for a chorus what could be better than the superb Ada Jones, escorted by four men-friends, giving new meaning to "By the Light of the Silvery Moon."

The programme included five "Damberols" dubbed from Edison Diamond Discs. A rather good one was Charles Harrison's enthusiastic rendering of "Funiculi Funicula." (By one of those happy accidents I discovered today, while searching in a reference book for something quite different, that Luigi Denza, who wrote this song for the opening of a funicular railway at Naples, settled in London in 1879 and was Professor of Singing at the Royal Academy of Music for 24 years until his death in 1922. Who would have thought it ?)

George Frow's excellent style and delivery improve with every talk he gives, but good as he was he was (once again) upstaged by his own immaculate Edison Idelia Phonograph, upon which the records were played. It is rare for me to hear cylinders reproduced so perfectly. When I do (and only then!) I can concede that those early enthusiasts who so fiercely maintained the superiority of the phono-cut cylinder over the lateral-cut disc might, after all, have had a case.

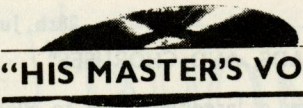
15th August 1987

## THE HISTORY OF ZONOPHONE IN BRITAIN

INEVITABLY the early part of Frank Andrews' talk on the history of Zonophone in Britain covered events which not only took place in the United States but ran closely parallel to the history of the Gramophone Company, some of which will be found again in the first pages of the article on "His Master's Voice Catalogues" in this very magazine. It will surprise nobody when I reveal that Mr. Andrews' research into his subject had been exhaustive, that his application to detail was complete and comprehensive. It is improbable that any facet of this important recording company's existence could have gone unremarked in the course of his marathon performance. A brief review such as this cannot hope to cover the expanse of Frank's talk, but fortunately he will be presenting it as a series of articles to appear in due course in "The Hillandale News."

A. O. Leon-Hall





## The "HIS MASTER'S VOICE" Show Train

by RUTH EDGE

ALFRED CLARK, Chairman of E.M.I., reported at the Ordinary General Meeting in November 1933 that business was prospering and "marching with the general revival of trade in this country." The manufacture of radio receiving sets and radio-gramophones had helped to fill the gaps in the factories caused by decreasing gramophone work for acoustic records and machines. Experimental work on television was continuing successfully; demonstrations had been given to technicians of the Post Office and the B.B.C. who were planning to install the E.M.I. apparatus in Broadcasting House for trials.

To increase trade, the Company felt it needed some special sort of campaign to advertise and promote sales, and it conceived the idea of a "His Master's Voice" National Show Train - a new form of trading; something different that nobody in the thirty years' experience of the musical home entertainment industry had done before.

E.M.I. put their idea to the Great Western Railway, who entered into the scheme wholeheartedly. The Manager of the E.M.I. Display Department and the Advertising Manager were invited to Swindon to view the rolling stock put at their disposal. What they saw were two identical scenery wagons and a restaurant car, all of which were suitable for the varying gauge requirements of railways over whose lines the train was to travel.

Mr. J. Charles, Manager of the Display Department who designed the train, had conceived the scheme some time before work secretly began at E.M.I.'s own railway sidings at Hayes. Hidden beneath three huge marquees, the Display Department's task was to make the three cars as alike as possible. The carriages, weighing more than 100 tons in all and having a total length of 160 feet, were completely rebuilt inside and out. Their old exteriors of vertical tongue and groove boards were covered with three-quarter inch laminated boards decorated in cream, orange and chromium in an 'ultra-modern' style. The curved contours of the restaurant car caused numerous problems in design, and eventually plywood was used to solve the matter, the edges being protected from the weather by metal strips. Across the two largest carriages stretched the words "His Master's Voice National Show Train", each letter being two feet six inches high. Of course, no H.M.V. item would be complete without its Trademark which was proudly displayed on each end of the train.

No expense was spared, either, on decorating the interior. The entrance to the train, complete with foyer, was at either side of one end of the restaurant car. Specially made chromium-plated furniture adorned the cafeteria which was serviced by a kitchen. One wagon, decorated in rose, chromium, and silver, was arranged as a showroom containing various gramophones, radio-gramophones and receivers. Each machine could be operated immediately, a feat which called for ingenious technical planning and equipment. To make the acoustics as near those in your own living room, a special curved ceiling was built into the



compartment to act as a sounding board.

One of the most complex problems in design was the amount of light and power needed. Anticipated total lighting and power load was 6 kilowatts, so a Lister 7.5 kilowatt automatic generator was chosen. Even the Chloride storage battery (220 volts) installed weighed  $1\frac{1}{4}$  tons! Messrs. Shell Mex and B.P. Ltd. provided the non-poisonous, non-flammable fuel.

A staff of three - Messrs. G. Fenwick, E. Marrable, and F. Masterson were to accompany the train on its journey. A firm of anti-vibration specialists had designed suitable sleeping accommodation for the men. It consisted of two half-inch thick steel plates, 6ft. by 3ft.6in., with cork and felt pads between the plates. Built-in cupboards and lockers were also provided.

A grand send-off for the train was planned for April 27th 1934. Great Western Railway arranged to bring the train to Paddington just after 9.00 a.m.; inspection by the Press began at 10 o'clock until the Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, arrived. He was taken over the train by Louis Sterling, Lord Marks, Alfred Clark and Landon Ronald. Several members of the G.W.R. also attended, including Sir Robert Horne, the Chairman.

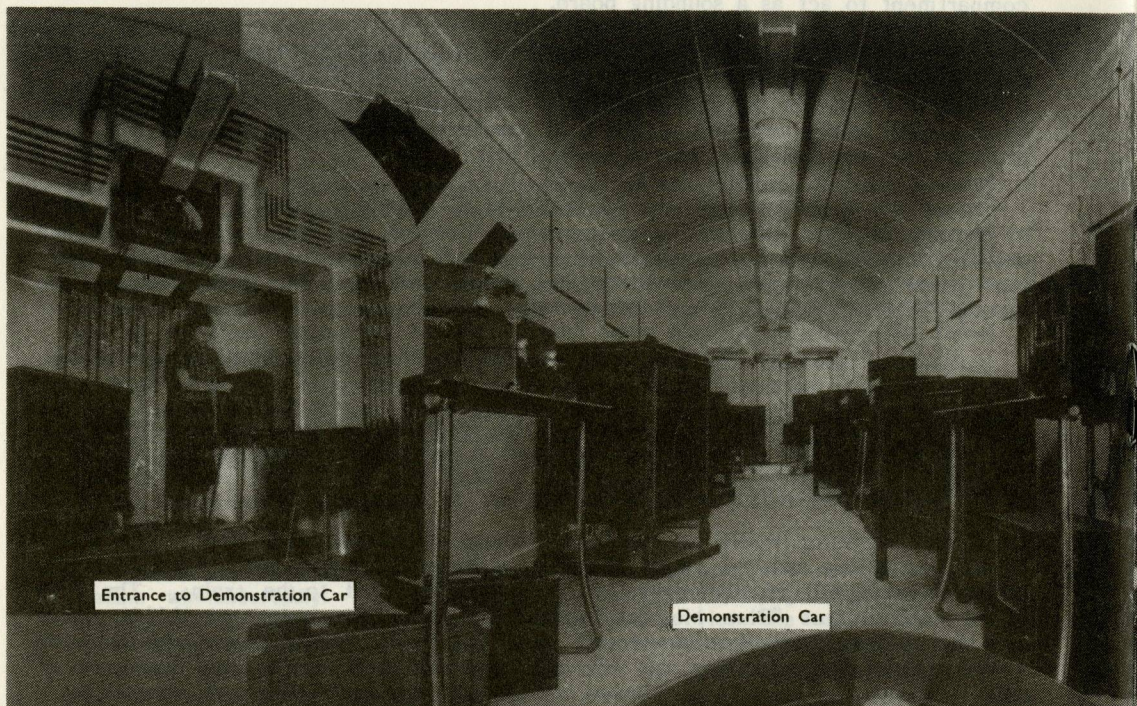
No christening would be complete without champagne and, after a few words by Louis Sterling and the Prime Minister, a little Scots girl, Miss Anne Murdoch, broke a valve full of champagne on a record attached to the train. The title of the record was "Blue Moments" signifying "that the train and H.M.V. goods are out to break up blue moments." As the Prime Minister left the train he waved a guard's green flag and the train set off for Victoria, its first port of call.

The first tour made by the train ended on August 2nd 1934, representing 79 working days. With the cooperation of the various railway companies, the H.M.V. train linked with ordinary passenger trains to visit some 59 towns and cover a distance of approximately 3,000 miles, Plymouth being the southernmost point and Aberdeen the northernmost.

At each chosen stopping place the train was given a civic reception. The train's Manager welcomed 10 Lord Mayors, 43 Mayors, and 3 Baronets. Admission to the train was by ticket only, H.M.V. Dealers choosing only people considered to be specially interested in the new products. 129,140 tickets were presented on the train representing the number of visitors officially received. The value of orders actually taken on the train was £25,223 but Dealers later confirmed the successful impact of the campaign on orders and sales.

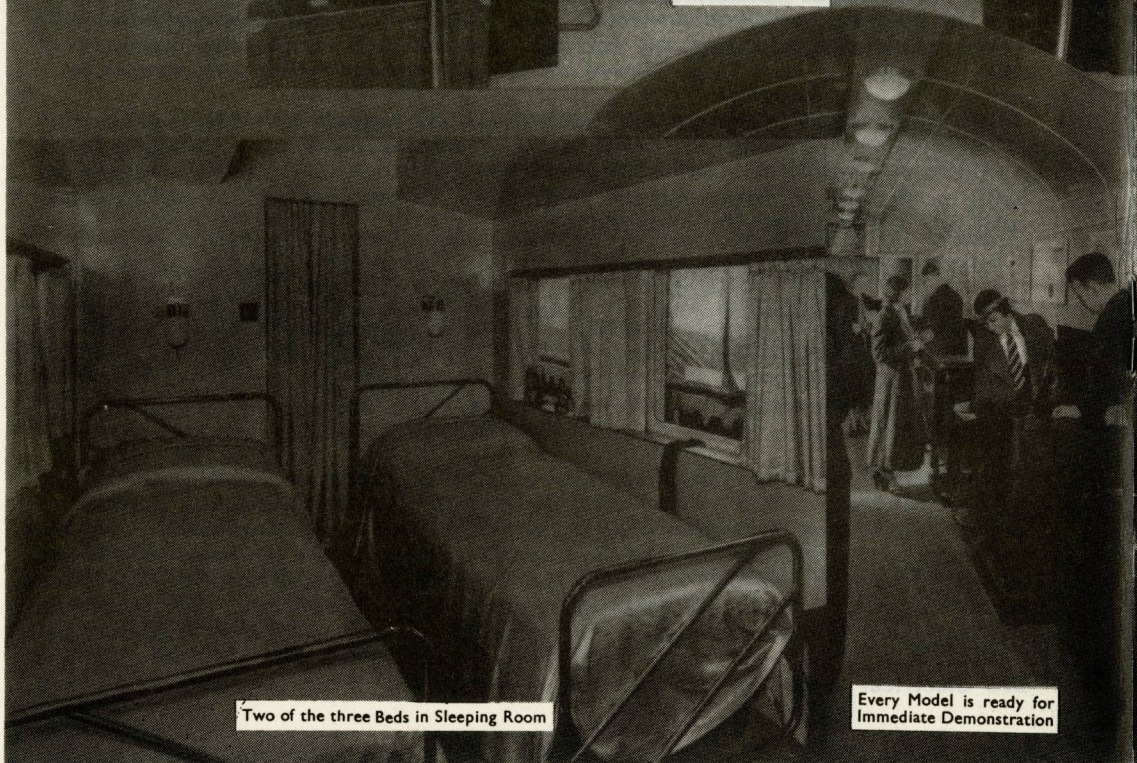
In order to make the Show Train a success, many technical problems had to be overcome. One of the greatest worries was if it would be possible to demonstrate radios and gramophones successfully in a railway coach with the light and power supply for the instruments obtained from a generator in an adjacent coach. Aerials were another problem. Should temporary ones be strung up at each stopping place, or should there be permanent ones inside the false roof of the demonstration car? The latter was found to be most successful and was adopted. Thirdly they had to consider the need for an A.C. and D.C electrical supply for the receivers, and how the living quarters' needs could





Entrance to Demonstration Car

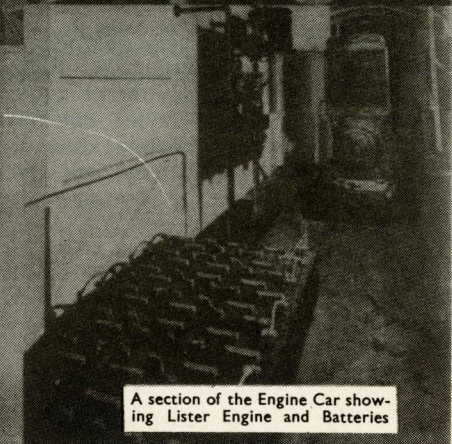
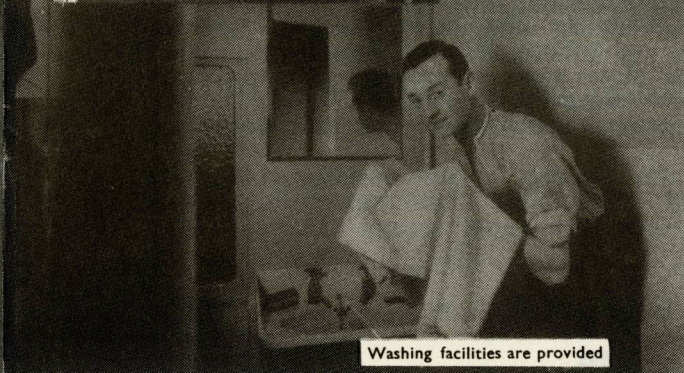
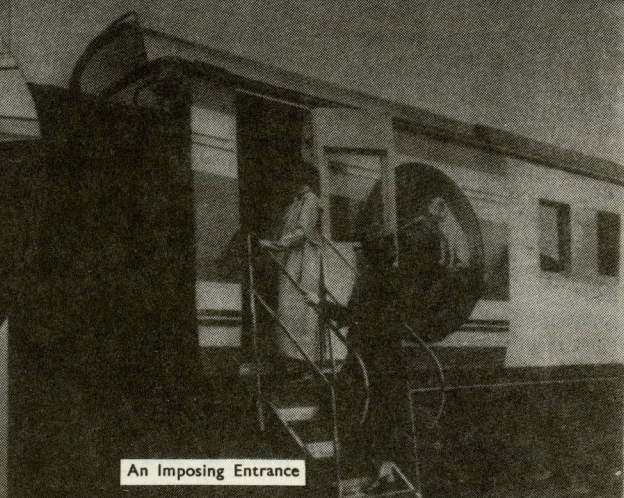
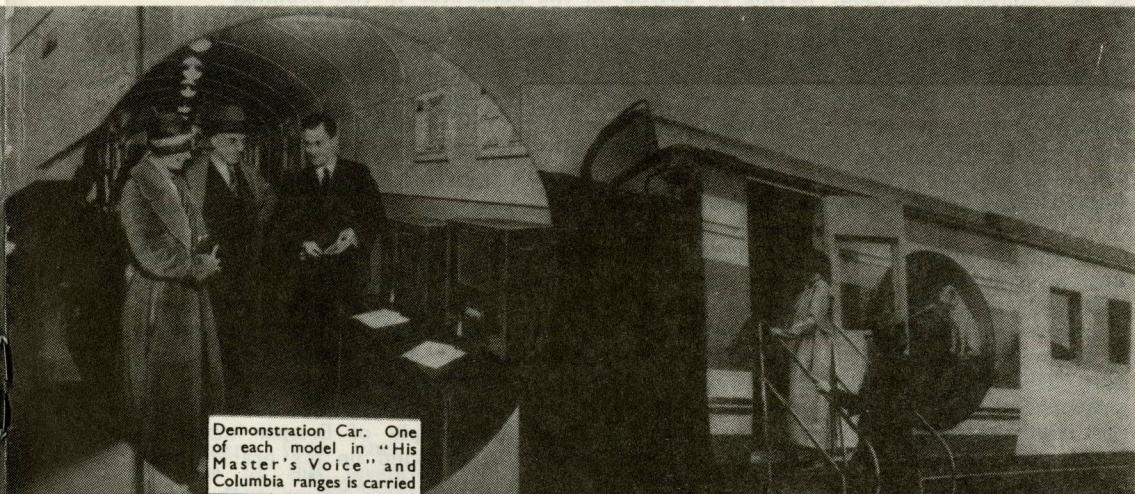
Demonstration Car



Two of the three Beds in Sleeping Room

Every Model is ready for Immediate Demonstration







be accommodated without having to switch on the generator in the evening.

After undergoing a thorough overhaul inside and out, the train started on its second National Tour. It left Hayes on August 20th and returned on November 1st 1934. Fifty-three towns were visited in fifty-three working days, and the mileage was approximately 2,800. Some of the towns visited on the first tour were again included in the itinerary, but at most of the stopping places the train was seen for the first time. 495 Dealers attended and 96,317 invitation tickets were used. Orders taken totalled £17,764.

The total cost to E.M.I. of the two tours was almost £6,000 but everyone was in agreement that it was money well spent. Although the train's main objective was the stimulation of sales, it had the important secondary object of publicity and propaganda. In the latter respect, interest had been very great in every part of the country. Thousands of people had been brought to realise that "His Master's Voice" was now as paramount for radio as it had been for gramophones before the era of wireless. As Ramsay MacDonald said before the train began its journey, "This is an outstanding example of British Industrial Enterprise." Sir Robert Horne, Chairman of G.W.R. summed up his praises with the words "You 'His Master's Voice' people always do things so well!"

I'm sure Nipper would have agreed!

## **Book Reviews**

THE EDISON PHONOGRAPH - THE BRITISH CONNECTION

by Frank Andrews

Published by the City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society

AS OUR President, George Frow, so rightly explains in his Foreword to this book, the commercial introduction and subsequent progress of the phonograph in Britain has received little modern study and documentation. Now, however, we have a not only comprehensive but almost exhaustive account from original sources by our assiduous member, Frank Andrews, already noted for his long-continued, intensive researches into talking machine history.

It contains a very detailed description of the now otherwise obscure companies that exploited the Edison Phonograph and Bell-Tainter Graphophone in this country during the Eighteen Nineties. An expanding and immensely successful trade in cylinder machines and records occurred here from 1898 to 1913, but a steady decline then took place owing to the increasing popularity of gramophones and lateral cut records beginning with Berliner discs, as well as the serious failure of phonograph supplies to Britain during the Great War.

For the first time we have detailed accounts of the companies collectively known to most of us as "Edison-Bell", the history of the Edison companies in this country, and many references to their competitors, notably Columbia, Pathé, Sterling, and Clarion.

This account is very closely written and deals with the complexities of



company history, trade advertisements, market trends, technological advances and human personalities. More might have been said on the rapid social changes of the period and fluctuations of public taste, but this book repays thorough reading as its remarkably fascinating story unfolds.

The often curious activities of some entrepreneurs in England, such as the eccentric Colonel Gouraud, Lewis Young, and James Hough, with their rather dubious trading methods, are described. A list of many of Gouraud's cylinders, and Hough's London Phonograph Company (1893-97) and Edisonia Ltd. (1897-1901) are also dealt with.

Here is the framework on which to base our understanding of the machines and records as historical documents of a vanished way of life, and Frank Andrews has succeeded admirably after a mountain of labour in providing this chronicle.

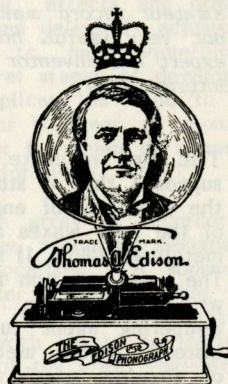
Apart from the entertainment phonograph trade, the use of this invention for office dictation was one of the first to be envisaged by Edison, and his machines were available for this purpose from 1889 to the closing of the London office of Thomas A. Edison Ltd. in 1965, and this aspect is not overlooked.

The author's narrative deals with the various commercial developments in chronological order, from the tinfoil phonograph of 1878 to Edison's Diamond Discs (not sold in Britain until 1919), the British tone tests, and the Long Playing Discs of 1926, with the final closing of the Musical Phonograph Division in 1929. The author discusses at length the opinions of the early Edison Phonograph Societies in this country on the quality of the Blue Amberols and Diamond Discs sold here after the 1914-1918 War, including the allegations of inferior dubbed cylinders, dismissed as "Damberols". The wealth of reference material includes public issue dates of the British cylinders, not easily available until now. The Edison Kinetophone sound film projector, the Home Kinetoscope, and the Alkaline Storage Battery, are also mentioned.

Misprints and erroneous statements are very few and the only real defect in this book is the excessive blackness or density of some of the photographs, at least in the review copy. It is, however, printed on good quality stout paper, and the cover is a montage from Edison advertisements, reproduced in two colours. This book, so closely packed with information, most of it hitherto unpublished, is of excellent value.

Altogether this is a fascinating account, and the author is to be congratulated on achieving publication of a definitive work.

J.N. Carreck





# How Gramophone Records are Made

by HENRY SEYMOUR

*"How Gramophone Records are Made" was the title of a sixpenny Gramophone Handbook in the Science and Musical Series published by the Sound Wave magazine. I don't know the date, but from various clues I suppose it was about 1920. I have reproduced the relevant technical content, amounting to perhaps 90% of the whole (the remainder is mainly cautionary advice directed to the amateur record maker, if any such ever existed). There are a few illustrations, not very useful, however. Seymour will be known to Society members as an expert and inventor in the field of acoustic recording, so his booklet is of some interest today.*

G. W. Taylor

THE first requisite for making a record is, of course, the blank. It is generally supposed that a stout disc of almost any kind of wax is eminently suitable for the operation of engraving the record. . . It has long since been found that none of the pure waxes are in any way suitable, and the reduction to soap, preferably metallised (Note 1) is a "sine qua non" for crisp cleavage with the recording stylus. The most common formula . . . is a lead soap, made by saponifying stearic acid with caustic soda, into which a lead pigment is incorporated, and to which a tempering agent such as the wax of paraffin or ceresine, or both, is added. Instead of the metallic element lead, some manufacturers employ the hydrate of alumina, which gives a beautiful texture to the mass and yields with greater delicacy to the finer motions of the stylus, corresponding to overtones in sound. The disadvantage of aluminium, on the other hand, is its tendency to be precipitated to the blank surface by the soda agent, and it is necessary to use such blanks very quickly, and before this chemical action proceeds too far, otherwise the surface noise arising from a record made therefrom will be much in evidence.

When the blank has been "cooked" to the required high temperature for a sufficient length of time to evaporate the watery elements of the soda lye and of condensation in other respects, it is ready for moulding in the required disc shape in receptacles made for the purpose, after which it is allowed gradually to cool: before, however, it is quite cold and relatively brittle, it should be transferred to the trimming machine to be rendered flat and truly circular, and then be set aside to cool some stages further. . . . The next step is to prepare the face of the blank for recording, and this is an extremely delicate operation, known as "shaving." This final surfacing is done on a very strongly and accurately built piece of mechanism, designed to rotate at comparatively high speed, with a light but extremely rigid feed device susceptible of no semblance of "back lash" or shake, the cutting edge of the tool being usually a clearance blade made of sapphire with an extremely sharp and highly polished edge of same width. This edge should be at least  $\frac{1}{4}$ " or  $\frac{3}{8}$ ", and very, very slightly curved for clearance. It should also have a slow rate of feed. It may be necessary to skim the blank face several times, taking a shallow cut, to ensure a fine and homogeneous surface, which is extremely desirable, both for brilliance in effect and for reducing to the minimum any kind of unequal resistance in the blank, arising from small ridges, to the delicate motions of the recording tool.

Before proceeding to make a record it is necessary to give the blanks a



certain degree of warmth in a special chamber. . . The necessity of warming the blanks is due to the need to secure the largest possible amplitude to the sound waves registered by the recording stylus, such sound waves having a very small potential impetus in themselves.

When records have been made on warmed blanks they should never be reproduced immediately, or the reproducing agent will as quickly destroy what has been accomplished and the result will be adjudged poor, when by waiting, say, a day, the effect, on reproduction, will reveal startling surprises. It is usual to make tests in the professional recording room for tonal effects and other details, which are soon after reproduced with a very light and delicately adjusted reproducer, which enables the experienced recording expert to judge something of the result when the record has passed through its several stages of development, from the wax prototype to its hard composition duplicate as sold to a critical public. . . . The final recording in the wax master is never, or should never be, played over, even once, before it is secured intact by means of a hard metallic matrix, or all its delicacies of overtone will be lost for ever . . .

The professional recorder has at his disposal quite an array of recorders, made up and mounted with diaphragms of different thicknesses, which are designed to suit the ever-varying sonorous qualities of different vocalists. A soprano or tenor voice seems to require a diaphragm of far greater frequency (that is to say, one having the inherent capacity to recover with considerable rapidity) than a contralto or baritone. It is the same, precisely, with regard to instruments of high pitch, such as the piccolo. The instruments of the lower registers, such as the tuba, 'cello, saxophone, etc., demand a more measured and ponderous movement in the diaphragm, in order to secure the most natural effects. It is, therefore, difficult to record any orchestral or military band combination and at the same time to give a true or relative value to the various instruments which are antithetical to their recording aptitude. Also, with mixed voices, the quartette is more troublesome and less effective than the duet, for the reason of the greater complexity of motion demanded of the diaphragm, while the still greater multiplicity involved in choir or chorus recording gives rise to still greater obscurity and produces only an ensemble effect, the overtones being entirely crowded out.

In addition to these mere mechanical limitations of the present recording apparatus, there are some voices which positively refuse to register at all, or at least, in a very feeble and imperfect manner. . . On the other hand, many of the best recording voices of the stock type known to the trade have, or appear to have, very indifferent sonorous qualities on the stage or concert platform, and the principal reasons why their names constantly figure in the catalogues from month to month is that experience has shown that they are able to produce first-class resonance in the record with the least possible difficulty to the recorder. All of which goes to show that a certain peculiar sonorous quality of the voice is more telling, for the work in hand, than the strident or explosive style of singing. The diaphragm should be suited to the artist, not so much the artist to the diaphragm.

In recording instrumental combinations it is absolutely necessary to group the performers in a proper manner in front of the recording horn, both as to distance and to position. It is customary to employ platforms or benches to raise certain instruments above the level of the others. The piccolo and flute



are generally positioned quite close to the horn mouth on one side. The side drum should be just below on the other side. The clarinets (generally four or six) should be ranged in equal numbers on both sides of the horn. The cornets (say three) may conveniently form a right angle row to the clarinets, while the trombones should be raised about three feet in a parallel row behind the cornets. French horns or saxophones may be conveniently accommodated on chairs in the square formed by the clarinets, cornets, and recording machine equipment. The tuba is very powerful in its effect on the diaphragm, and should be placed well back, and not blown too lustily. The euphonium is also a little troublesome with beginners, but a great deal may be done by manipulation of the mouthpiece (Note 2). The tubes known as chime-bells should also be placed well in the background.

Stringed instruments are much more difficult to record than those of the wind type. The 'cello should be "spiked" upon a sandbag or other insulator to arrest the intense reverberation which it would otherwise communicate to the floor of the recording room, and by that means set up powerful conflicting sound waves in front of the recording horn. The violin, unless it happens to be a "Strad", usually records very weakly (Note 3) and the "Stroh" violin is often called into requisition for recording work to give the required volume and intensity of tone.

This is an ingenious device brought out some years ago by Mr. Stroh, being, to all intents an ordinary violin without a belly, the strings being tensioned over a diaphragm attached to a small amplifying horn. The sound is augmented thereby to an extraordinary degree, and is thus easily recorded. The pianoforte has also presented difficulties in recording, and at one time it was almost impossible to distinguish its recorded effects from those of a musical box. But this was on account of the recording diaphragm being too small to respond to any but the upper registers, and the practice to locate the recording horn in close proximity to these registers. Much-improved results have been obtained in recent years by the use of larger diaphragms and multiple horns covering about three middle octaves. This arrangement has proved far more satisfactory than a single horn of corresponding amplitude. The grand piano is not at all best for recording purposes, even though the mouth of the horn be directed over the strings or at 45 degrees angle to the reflecting lid. The best results are obtained from the sounding-board of an upright type of piano, with the felt key hammers well ironed or otherwise hardened. It is usual to raise the piano upon a bench two to three feet from the floor and to direct the mouth of the recording horn to the back thereof, about on a level with the keyboard in the front.

It is impossible, in a short sketch like this, to enumerate the thousand-and-one little tricks on which the recorder perforce has to rely to secure extraordinary effects of one kind or another . . . a theme to be recorded may require the observance of extreme light and shade on the part of the vocalist, running up to a fortissimo top note by way of climax. Now obviously, this is putting the recording diaphragm to a great test. In order that the delicate overtones which are invariably associated with the waves of gradation in light and shade be faithfully recorded, it is absolutely necessary that the diaphragm shall be extremely sensitive. Yet, when the robust or fortissimo passages occur, this very desirable quality in the diaphragm, for the one aspect of vibration, is fatal for the other. The usual practice is to select the most sensitive diaphragm for work of this character, and the singer is trained to draw back some distance from the mouth of the horn when robust notes are uttered to prevent what is known as "blasting", which is merely the result of over-straining the capacity



of the particular diaphragm, causing it to rebound violently, and to register extrinsic mechanical motion in addition to true sonorous vibration. By various devices this difficulty may be largely overcome.

Let us now assume that we are behind the scene, so to speak, of the recording room. It is a band "session" . . . The expert has just taken a disc blank from the "oven" and placed it securely on the turntable of the recording machine, which is driven by a weight, or what is called a gravity motor - a turret clock sort of mechanism. He sees that the drum is wound up to its full extent with the fine steel cable or cord, which over a pulley suspends about a hundredweight of strain. He starts the turntable rotating. The correct speed having been adjusted beforehand, a regular motion is soon reached, and he touches an electric switch. This sends word to the conductor by means of a red lamp in the other room that all is ready, without the utterance of any vocal sound which might easily be recorded by way of preface. The recording tool is gently lowered to the wax, an even track in the form of a spiral on the wax surface is now plainly visible. Another signal for the conductor to go ahead. The spiral line immediately quivers in varying frequencies and amplitudes. The sound waves are being automatically registered, and the fine clean curl of wax-like thread gathers about the stylus. By means of a small suction blower or fan these shavings are gathered up and put out of mischief. They might otherwise clog or impede the mirror surface of the blank. This goes on for three or four minutes without intermission, and the selection is finished. The recording tool is then carefully lifted, and the recording expert shouts "all right." Then the talking is resumed. With a strong magnifying glass the record is minutely inspected for the discovery of mechanical defects if any, and is ultimately put aside in a cabinet to cool, free from the damage of dust . . .

Having secured the record, which is called the "master", the next stage is to prepare it for the depositing bath. It is thoroughly and carefully dusted with a camel's hair brush to remove any trace of wax shaving or other superfluous element in the case. After which it is as thoroughly and carefully dusted with the finest grade of graphite powder until its entire face is metallised (carbon-coated) for the purpose of rendering it electrically conductive.

It is afterwards despatched to the matrix shop . . . By a suitable supporting means, the master record is placed in a bath of sulphate of copper solution, slightly acidified with sulphuric acid. This bath, or rather its solution, forms part of an electric circuit, the anode of electrolytic copper being also suspended in the solution, while the master record is, of course, the cathode. When the current is switched on, it passes from the anode . . . and . . . thence through the solution to the cathode, decomposing the sulphate of copper and depositing the pure metal upon the (carbon-coated) face of the master recording in grains. The longer the immersion takes place with the current working, the thicker the deposit will naturally be, and when the electrotype is about a 16th of an inch in thickness or even less, it is removed from the bath and thoroughly rinsed under the tap, to remove all traces of "salts" . . . the exact density of the bath solution . . . should be about 21 specific gravity if tested by a Baumé hydrometer. (Note 4)

We have, so far, reached the stage only of the "master" matrix. No record-manufacturing firm would ever dream of using this for the purpose of pressing



records for the public. It would prove too costly. The number of pressings from a single matrix is comparatively limited. The plan, therefore, is to make a metallic positive from the original metallic negative, and from this, any number of further negatives may be secured by the same depositing process. These secondary negative matrices are known as "stampers" because only those are used for stamping or pressing records. The amount of pressure required to obtain a perfectly close impression of the record track is so enormous that a matrix must necessarily have a comparatively short life. For hardening the surface and giving a brilliant appearance to the record it is customary to nickel-plate the working matrix face. This is effected by the same depositing method, but by means of a different solution and nickel anode, and only a very thin film of metal is attached, after which it is washed and polished to a high finish. Before this is done, however, the "stamper" has to be backed up for strengthening purposes by a disc of copper or brass at least one eighth of an inch in thickness, turned true on the face-plate of a lathe, and the central hole bored, which allows the central stud of the dies to pass through. These dies are made of steel, accurately turned to fit closely together by suitably engaging studs; and, in the case of a double-sided record, a different matrix is inserted in each, by means of a suitable recess, so that when the dies are placed together each record matrix faces the other. The black composition used for records is heated, when it becomes plastic (in consequence of containing a certain proportion of shellac), and a lump of it is placed between the matrices, which are also warmed with the dies on steam-heated iron benches. The dies are then placed between the plates of the hydraulic press, which exerts no less than half-a-ton pressure to the square inch. The water jackets of the press plates are at once in operation, and in a few minutes the record composition is sufficiently squeezed and chilled to enable the record to be extricated from the dies, after which it is put aside on a level place to set quite hard, which it soon does, when exposed to the atmosphere.

It is often supposed that the usual printed paper label indicating the title and catalogue number of the record, which is affixed to the centre of the disc, is stuck upon the record by a suitable adhesive, but this is not the case. The labels, with a central hole punched, are placed against the matrix over the central die stud, and the printed matter facing the matrix face. The black composition, consisting of various elements, viz., shellac, pyrites, lamp black, and sometimes cotton flock for binding, when warmed to the consistency of baker's dough, is placed in a lump upon the label back; and when the upper die is pressed against the lower, the composition is pressed against the label and squeezed; and as the squeezing proceeds it forces the composition from the centre to the circumference, and outlets are provided in the periphery of the dies to permit the exudation of any superfluous material. The next operation, after cooling is effected, is to true the outer edge (by grinding with carborundum). The record is now completed for the market, some being sent to the testing room to be played over for discovery of defects (if any), after which - if it is passed - it is put into its paper cover and passed on to the stock room ready for sale.

## NOTES

1. A 'soap' in its widest sense is a salt of a fatty acid. Virtually all such salts contain a metal, so Seymour's 'preferably metallised' would normally be satisfied.



2. This is not clear to me. Is Seymour referring to beginners as recordists or players ?

3. One has heard of certain violinists 'projecting' in the concert hall. This also seems a requirement in acoustic recording.

4. Baumé was an eighteenth-century French chemist, chiefly remembered for his hydrometer for measuring the density of solutions. To convert Seymour's "21 specific gravity" to a concentration of copper sulphate, the temperature of the solution is also needed.

G. W. Taylor

## 75 Years Ago

*To the Editor, "Talking Machine News", January 1912*

### To Repair Cracked Records

Dear Sir, - A good method of repairing cracked records, both disc and cylinder, is to heat a wire staple, such as is used to bind periodicals, and push through the record, turning the ends over; this will effectually prevent the record cracking any further. If heated and pushed quickly through it is a very neat job.

ARTHUR CASTLE, Ramsgate

### Square Spindles to Prevent Records Slipping

Dear Sir, - Much correspondence has taken place on the matter of disc records slipping on the turntable, causing unsatisfactory results in reproduction. Clamps and other contrivances have been resorted to by way of rectifying the defect, but not with very satisfactory results. It remains a mystery to me why makers persist in fitting round spindles through turntables, with a corresponding round hole in the discs, when a little thought will show that if such spindles are made square, and the hole in the record to correspond, slipping could not possibly take place.

JACK ROBERTS

### A Wooden Phonograph Trumpet

Dear Sir, - I have sent you the following hint how to make a wooden trumpet for the phonograph. I procured some pieces of willow 1/8 in. thick and 11 in. long. These I cut into slips 3/4 in. broad at one end and 1/8 in. at the other, and glued fourteen pieces of these onto a piece of American cloth to form part of a semicircle, and when the glue was dry, bent it round to form a cone, on the small end of which I glued a small cardboard funnel, which took the reproducer. I then made some more slips. These were 3/4 in. at one end, 2 1/2 in. at the other, and 6 in. long. These also I glued onto a piece of cloth and bent round; they formed the bell of the trumpet when glued on. The result was a trumpet about 20 in. by 11 in. at the mouth, which gives full, round, long tones without the slightest metallic ring in the voices of the singers and brings out the woodwind, reed and string instruments with grand results.

F. WOOD, Manchester



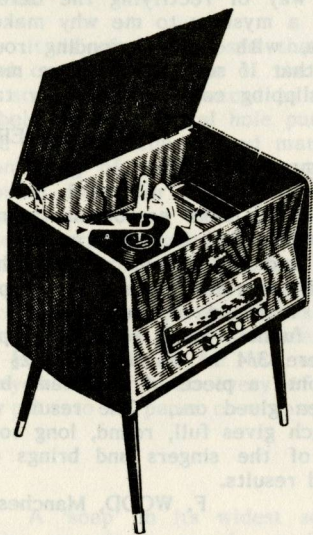
## NOTES FROM THE BOOKSHELF

ONE OF the pleasures of running the Society's Bookshelf operation is meeting with and talking to a far wider spectrum of members than I otherwise would. These conversations usually start with "have you got . . ." or "I would like to see a reprint of . . ." Soon we find that we are discussing our individual collections or areas of interest. One thing that comes across from many quarters - especially from those for whom the Hillandale News is the only contact with the Society - is the broad base of interests within the Society.

I have spoken to record collectors, phonograph specialists, gramophone experts, and juke-box collectors. I have discovered an increasing number of collectors who are interested in later machines. Possibly this is because the average price of a decent "talking machine" (or wind-up) is now well beyond their means. To the collector who maintains a catholic collection the ownership of a Deccola or even a Dansette should raise no eyebrows.

It is with these members in mind that I write to seek support for the inclusion of articles about the post acoustic/mechanical age. (I am sure that Christopher Proudfoot would inform me of my heresy and coin a better term for the class of Talking Machine not dependent upon electrons to achieve amplification!)

Whilst I don't want to push the barriers too far into the compact disc age, I do feel that we must not merely peg our arbitrary definition of what is or is not collectable at a point in time that is becoming more and more remote and thus excludes numbers of collectors from our ranks. I know from attending meetings across the land that these definitions do not exist at "grass roots" level (or should that be "at the bottom of the groove"?). So how about it? Do you want more on later developments?



In the past year the Rugby team (pardon the pun!) have introduced a new-style Book List, and all members should by now have received a copy, together with a new price list/order form. UK members will note that we have dropped the member's discounts in favour of free postage for members. This is designed to have several benefits, including a direct encouragement to join the Society, one price structure regardless of how a member purchases a book from the Bookshelf, i.e., whether by post or direct sale at a bazaar or local meeting. Overseas members will still have to pay postage because of the higher charges involved, as a rate of 20% of goods purchased. We hope this will encourage higher value orders, but we will keep the situation under review. Overseas members can now telex their orders and their remittances. Details of this service



appear on the overseas order forms, and your local banks will be able to advise you on the procedure. For those overseas members who have problems in obtaining sterling remittances (we have problems too in exchanging foreign cheques - they are called Bank Charges) we will shortly be arranging through our Treasurer a Dollar Account.

Some new titles have been added to the list in the last year, most notably Frank Andrews' account of the Edison Phonograph in Britain. We started the year with another Edison connection, "Restoring the Edison Gem" by Mike Field. A comparative rarity, the "New Century Catalogue" of 1903/4 was loaned to us for reprinting by Paul Woolens of York. Those who have been able to compare the original and the reprint have expressed only one disappointment in the reprint - the replacement of the original red wool stitching with two staples!

Dave Roberts continues to assist the bookshelf operation by finding sources of supply that those north of Watford might not otherwise find. He has also loaned us a copy of the Columbia Company's parts lists for 1923/8: profusely illustrated it lists fully which parts were used on which machine. There are also a couple of marginal notes, by the owners of the original copy, on obsolescence.

For the record collector we have obtained a limited quantity of the Parlophone Rhythm Style Catalogue by Edgar Jackson (1946). It includes and details all the wartime deletions. These are not new reprints but the original printing of 40 years ago. Some familiar titles have regrettably been withdrawn from the list: they include the two titles from the Royal Scottish Museum, and Christopher Proudfoot's book published by Studio Vista.

Remember if you have a booklet that you think would be of interest to other members and would reprint well, let the Rugby Team know about it. Even if we cannot take an early reprint (we have to watch the budget) we can make negatives from the pages and hold them until the time is opportune for a printing. Similarly we are anxious to add to the restoration titles started by Mike Field. Should you have anything for consideration by the Society for publication please write to the Bookshelf at 134 Railway Terrace, Rugby CV21 3HN, enclosing if possible a photocopied page(s) of the original. For your own sake, please do not send the original through the mails.

Paul Hartup and I look forward to meeting many more members and friends as we take the Bookshelf to local and national meetings of our Society.

John W. Booth

*Even John Booth may not have intended his remarks on "later developments" to extend to the Ferguson Model 623RG depicted on the previous page, but despite its being less than 30 years old this machine is already being regarded as quaint and eminently collectable by the 1987 equivalent of the keen collector who used to get paid a pound to take away that stuffy old Edison Diamond Disc machine.*



# Letters

Cleveland Heights, Ohio, USA 16th July 1987

Dear Mr. Martland,

Would you please pass along to Mr. George Taylor my congratulations and my thanks for having produced the best written, most comprehensive and most interesting article I have ever read on the Bettini cylinders. It is a fascinating presentation. Thank you.

John D. Baldwin

[REDACTED] 26th July 1987

Dear Sir, - Allow me, through your columns, to apologise to the many who were confused by the anonymous comment on my notice which appeared on page 166, February 1987, Hillandale. The confusion arose from the publication of the comment before the notice, and continued when the notice appeared because of the apparent irrelevancy of the comment. Coming as I do from this city of 600,000 comedians I recognise the comment as humour or, more correctly, I should say "I just recognise . . ."

I am baffled by the fact that my comment sent for inclusion in Hillandale Extras and not to the editor became ripe for comment in the body of the magazine before inclusion in the extras. Anyone reading the comment will have concluded that my notice concerned the risks to life and limb of fitting and removing mainsprings. Had I chosen to write on such a subject I would have made the point that there is very little risk to anyone with two hands and a modicum of common sense, and that the methods referred to in the Reiss book, together with those "spring in a bag" and "fling it in the garden" methods, greatly exaggerate a small risk.

The point I make is that the methods referred to will damage your spring and should not be used.

Indeed, the recommended method seems to me, an overweight over-middle-aged arthritic, to be an extremely athletic and risky performance which owes more to Mr. Reiss' theatrical connection than to anything phonographic. Perhaps the comment should have been that Mr. Reiss can damage your health. Certainly this book, replete with incorrect information and a mixture of good, bad and indifferent advice, can damage your phonograph. It seems amazing to me that this inadequate book should have received no less than two wholly approving reviews without any reservation.

On a more serious note, I do not see comments, anonymous or otherwise, on inserts in Hillandale Extras by Howard Hope, Jerry Madsen, Expert Pickups, etc., and I see no reason why I should accept them. Yours, etc.,

Barry A. Williamson, Phonoservice





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